

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Only in Washington, Mr. Speaker, could Congress be prepared to add a whole new entitlement to Medicare which may cost children like my today 10-year-old daughter Charlotte \$7 trillion and Democrats are holding up tombstones to say Medicare is being phased out. It is astonishing to a conservative like me.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I informed our leadership that I cannot support the creation of a new Federal entitlement in the form of a universal drug benefit in Medicare, which is not to say that I am not ready today to help those at or near the level of poverty that are struggling with that terrible choice between food and rent and prescription drugs.

□ 1015

Let us focus resources at the point of the need and not answer the scare tactics of the other side and end up playing their game and creating an all new massive Federal entitlement that kids like my little Charlotte will have to pay for for generations.

THE REPUBLICANS' PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. How can the Republicans spend \$400 billion on a prescription drug benefit that will impose costs without benefits on many seniors and a totally inadequate benefit for those most in need? We start with the premise that, first and foremost, the plan is designed to protect and enhance the profits of the pharmaceutical industry and the private insurance industry. Yes, seniors will be pushed into a confusing maze of PPO, HMO, discount card, private insurance plans, no limit on premiums, no limit on profits, and no required benefits. Very expensive. The pharmaceutical industry will prevent the reimportation of their manufactured U.S. drugs from Canada, and they are going to protect the obscene prices they get for their drugs.

This plan will do a great job protecting the profits of the pharmaceutical industry and the insurance industry but pitifully little for our Nation's seniors, those so much in need. But so it should be. The insurance and pharmaceutical industries are the number one and number two campaign contributors to the Republican Party.

MEDICARE REFORM

(Mr. BURNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, the debate rages over health care in this country. I rise in support of improved health care for our Nation's seniors, and I think it has to be done through Medi-

care. I believe that Congress can truly improve the seniors' standard of living through preventative care and alternative treatment. The proposed Medicare reform legislation will move us in the right direction. I am encouraged by the prospects of shifting Medicare from a system that manages seniors when they are already sick into a system that is designed to prevent them from becoming sick in the first place. Preventative care is a part of the Medicare reform. Preventative care is truly the best form of care that we can and we should provide for our America's seniors.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

(Mr. EMANUEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, what is missing from the debate about Medicare this week is how to make medications more affordable at affordable prices and more accessible to all Americans of all ages. And this is not a partisan problem. It is an American problem.

We have a bipartisan bill to use market forces to reduce prices, allow generics to come to market to compete against name-brand drugs, which would save \$60 billion over the next 10 years. Another piece of our legislation uses market forces to allow consumers, businesses, Federal Government through Medicare to buy drugs in 27 countries, be they Germany, France, England, Italy, Canada, where prices are 40 to 50 percent cheaper.

I have the full confidence through our market forces we can make medications cheaper, and I have the confidence and hope my colleagues have the confidence in market forces that they are able to do that.

The third component would be to allow the NIH to recoup a 10 percent royalty on any drug developed with taxpayer resources. In the private sector, 30 percent is normally recouped on a rate of return. Ten percent for NIH funded research, all the cancer drugs, all the AIDS drugs on the market are developed with taxpayer return.

We should no longer consider taxpayer research dumb money. We should recoup that money because the NIH is the largest venture capital fund out there, use market forces to reduce prices, make medications for all Americans more affordable.

THE PRESCRIPTION DRUG PROGRAM

(Mr. SMITH of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, on the prescription drug program that we are about to vote on this week, I am not an expert on health care or prescriptions; but I have observed over the years what happens when govern-

ment takes over some of these programs. The big change of course was when we amended the Social Security bill in 1965 to add Medicare. We estimated at that time that the cost of Medicare by 1990 would be \$9 billion. It was \$70 billion projected 2003 to be \$26 billion, but the actual cost today is \$265 billion. This bill we are estimating at \$400 billion. I suggest that is a very low estimate, and the second 10 years is the greater challenge because of retirements.

To seniors, the danger is they are going to start out with choice on whether seniors keep their current Medicare and other insurance; but eventually as government goes broke and needs the money, there is the tendency to force everybody in the program to moderate the cost of the program. Industry is promoting this system because eventually they are going to reduce their prescription drug coverage to the retirees that they are now paying for. After that comes rationing. I think there are a lot of disadvantages for seniors in this bill, Mr. Speaker.

HOLDING THE ADMINISTRATION ACCOUNTABLE

(Mr. ETHERIDGE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call on Congress to support accountability in education reform. Last year, Congress passed President Bush's "no child left behind" education reform bill. The legislation authorized billions of dollars in new funding to support administration's reform effort that seeks to ensure accountability from our schools, but who will hold the administration accountable?

The fact is that this administration is shortchanging our schools nearly \$20 billion under the No Child Left Behind. While our schools' struggle to meet tough new standards and local budgets is stretched to the limit in this bad economy, the administration has failed its responsibility to provide leadership and resources for our schools. Congress must hold the administration accountable. I have introduced legislation to do just that. H.R. 2366 requires full funding of the No Child Left Behind act or suspends its punitive measures. Without full funding, No Child Left Behind will become a massive unfunded mandate that will require cuts in vital services and increased property taxes or both. Similar legislation has been introduced in the other body, and I urge my colleagues to join me in this effort to hold the administration accountable to our children, to our schools, and to our taxpayers.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)